

The FLASH

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OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE AUSTIN HEALEY SPORTS & TOURING CLUB



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Main Cover Photo: Red Sprite

*Smaller: Don Hoffer, Shawn Miller, Rene Sanders, Joe Spear, Juan Valdez, Fred Sherk;
There was only one Austin-Healey on the show field at the Amelia Island Concours
d'Elegance; Dee Caffrey, Katie Coletti, and Ann Ehret enjoying "Pizza at Pete's".*

What's In The Flash

by Steve Jekogian

Spring has certainly sprung and it has been great driving weather in New Jersey. My Healey started right up and wanted to go, go, go. And so did I. Lots of car show coming up so check the events schedule in the Flash and get out there.

Baird Foster has researched and written a great article on the “hunt for Healey History”. It is an article about the Sebring Sprite. If you were at Encounter 2010 at Normandy Farms in PA., you probably saw the unrestored red Sprite which was an instant draw.

Baird’s article is quite interesting and it always amazes my how the history of a 50 year car can be pieced together. As always, special thanks to Baird for preparing this article and letting it be published in the Flash for all the AHSTC members.



Membership

by Rick Brodeur

We have some new members this month.

PHILADELPHIA

Robert & Mimi Morrow
Wyndmoor, PA
'57 BN4

BRANDYWINE

Thomas Snyder
Newark, DE
'55 BN1

If you haven't signed up to the website you should so you can get access to member-only content. When you sign up on the website as a member I'll get an email. Within a day or two I'll verify you're a member and authorize access to the member only area. We have a calendar of events for the year on the website along with some Encounter information and registration form.

We've updated the instructions for the region editors to add content to the website. You should see more new information soon on the site.

If you have a question about your membership or renewal date, please contact me.

Our member lists are available to any member just for the asking. Each Region President has a copy that can be distributed, and I will send out a copy to any member who requests one. I prefer to send them out via email, but if that's not available to you just call or email me and I'll send out a paper copy.

My email address for the Club is membership@austin-healey-stc.org. If you have any questions about your membership please contact me. Contacting me is the quickest way to solve a membership problem. My phone number and email address are on the inside front page of the Flash and also on our web site.



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Lehigh Valley

by Joel Keefer

After putting up with the winter of 2010-11, we vowed that this year we'd escape from the cold, snow and ice to someplace warm. And then comes the winter of 2011-12, or should I say the non-winter? Whatever – we had decided to go south to Key West, attending the Amelia Island Concours d'Elegance on the way down and the AACA meet in Melbourne, FL on the way home.

Amelia Island was an awesome experience! The Ferrari 250 GTO and coachbuilt Cadillacs were the featured marques this year, and there were also plenty of other legendary cars and personalities on hand. And there was even a lone Austin-Healey, a 1964 Works Healey 3000 that competed in the 1964 and 1965 12 Hours of Sebring, scoring an impressive victory in the 1965 race under torrential conditions. The car has had only six owners since it was new, and is considered the most original Works Healey to survive with its original body and engine. Fellow Lehigh Region member Bob Pritchett also attended Amelia Island, but our paths didn't cross.

Our initial "Saturday Morning Tour To Wherever" was originally scheduled for March 24, but was postponed to March 31. A few Lehigh Valley members gathered on the 24th for an impromptu run through some of Lehigh, Northampton and Bucks Counties' back roads. President Mike Bradley was joined by Joel Keefer, Ken Beck and Bob Pritchett. It's amazing how many terrific sports car roads there are in this area; I thought I was pretty familiar with this area but Mike showed me just how wrong I was on that score!! April's "Tour To Wherever" will be on Sunday, April 15, and our Spring Rallye is scheduled for Sunday, April 22. Stand by for more details in the form of an E-Flash from Mike.

Please note this change to the 2012 region participation award points. Regular monthly meetings will not be included for points; since almost no members drive their Austin Healeys to the monthly meetings at the Top Diner, it didn't make a whole lot of sense to include them. If we have a monthly meeting at another location (e.g. in connection with an ice cream run), we will award points. To recap, 25 points will be awarded to members who drive their Austin Healeys to these events. Members who host or organize events also will receive 25 points. Regular events and activities that will count toward participation points will be:

- Spring Rallye, April 22
- Tour to Carlisle Import & Kit Nationals, May 18-20 (specific date for tour TBD)
- British Motorcar Gathering, Hellertown, June 9
- All British Car Show, Clark's Summit, late July
- AHSTC Encounter, Somerset, NJ, August 9-11
- Tour to the Taste of Britain Polo Match and Car Show, Rothsville, PA, late August
- Tour to Buckingham Concours, September 16
- Fall Rallye, September 30
- Autumn Leaf Auto Show, Moravian Academy, October 6
- Fall Wine Tour, October (date TBD)

Additional events and activities may be added throughout the year; if and when they are, we'll announce changes via E-Flash.

Next region meeting is Monday, April 16, 6:30 pm, at the Top Diner in Allentown.

Lehigh Valley Cont...

April

- 15: Sunday Morning Tour to Wherever
- *16: Monthly Meeting, Top Diner
- *22: Spring Rallye

May

- 5: Britfest '12, Succasunna, NJ
- 12: Saturday Morning Tour to Wherever
- *18-20: Tour to Carlisle Import & Kit Nationals
- *21: Monthly Meeting, Top Diner

June

- 3: Sunday Morning Tour to Wherever
- *9: British Motorcar Gathering, Hellertown
- *18: Monthly Meeting, Top Diner (or ice cream run)

July

- 14: Brits on t bhe Delaware, Kintnersville, PA
- *15: LV Region Picnic & Monthly Meeting
- *TBD: All British Car Show, South Abington Park, Clark's Summit, PA

August

- 3-5: Das Awkscht Fescht, Macungie, PA
- *8-11: AHSTC Encounter, Somerset, NJ
- *20: Monthly Meeting, Top Diner
- *TBD: Tour to Taste of Britain Polo Match and Car Show, Rothsville, PA

September

- 9: Sunday Morning Tour to Wherever
- *16: Tour to Buckingham Concours, Holicong, PA
- *17: Monthly Meeting, Top Diner
- *30: Fall Rallye

October

- *6: Autumn Leaf Auto Show, Moravian Academy
- *15: Monthly Meeting, Top Diner
- *TBD: LV Region Fall Wine Tour

November

- TBD: Tech Session
- *19: Monthly Meeting, Top Diner

December

- 8: LV Region Christmas Party
- *17: Monthly Meeting, Top Diner



The car's engine recently was rebuilt by Dennis Welch Motorsports.



There was only one Austin-Healey on the show field at the Amelia Island Concours d'Elegance. This one competed in the 1964 and 1965 12 Hours of Sebring, winning in 1965.



A few Lehigh Valley members did an impromptu road tour on some back roads in Lehigh, Northampton and Bucks Counties on Saturday, March 24. At least there's one Healey in the picture!

Long Island

by Paul Parfrey

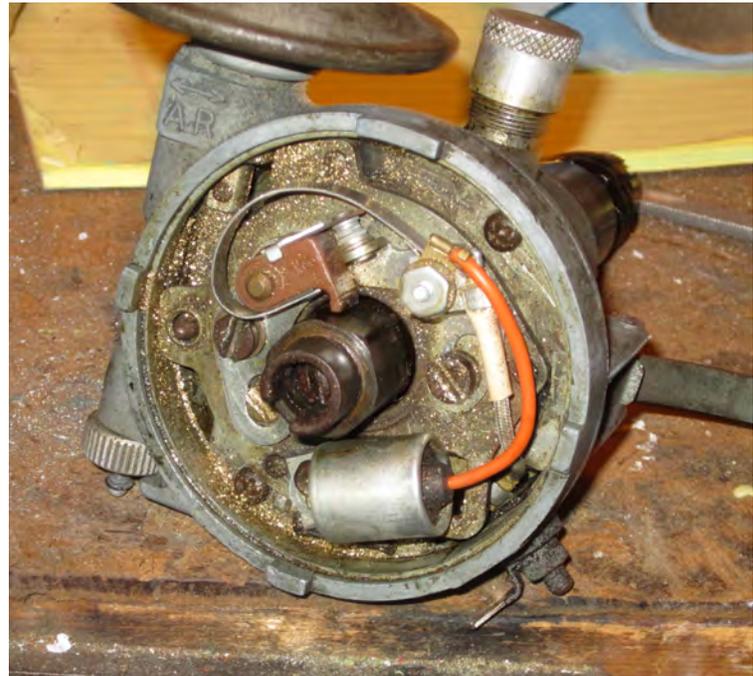
Such pretty glitter in your distributor: a long-standing automotive mystery solved!

Mary Ann Sekelsky's 1960 BT7 always had a high speed miss. An ignition tune-up with new points, condenser, cap and rotor had improved it somewhat but yet, over 3000 rpm, the missing and bucking were still there. Close inspection of the carburetors showed a lean mixture and two different piston return springs: one looked correct, the other had been cut down much shorter. A quick call to Joe Curto produced two new springs of the correct length and color (they are color-coded) for a '60 BT7. The correct set of springs would allow the damper piston in the dome in each carb to rise at the same rate. Better still, but nowhere near 100%. Tony DiFrancesca had had his distributor rebuilt because of a non-functioning vacuum canister. I drove his car just recently and it accelerated to 4000+ rpm with no problem. Last week, Susan and I went to lunch with Mary Ann and Ted and I thought I'd just look in the distributor. Lo and behold, it looked like the inside of a golden snow globe or maybe a Lady Gaga-inspired craft project! It didn't take Sherlock Holmes to figure out the distributor cam was wobbling on the shaft. Check out the photos of the inside of the distributor and the grooves worn in the brass terminals of the cap by the rotor. The distributor is now on its way to Advanced Distributors in Minnesota.

Hopefully, folks have had opportunities to enjoy their Healeys with this warm weather. Looking ahead to when the calendar and weather will be in sync.



Grooves worn in distributor cap terminals.



Brass filings inside Healey distributor.

Harrisburg

by Don Hoffer

We'll start with a brief report on February's meeting that failed to appear in last month's Flash. Joe's never ending effort to visit every chow hall in the area took us to the "Warf" on the East side of Harrisburg. Joe thinks he's president of the Austin-Healey Sports and Restaurant Club. He also has been writing this article due to your scribe's long time on the D.L. - thanks Joe.

Big draw of the evening was hot wheels races down the middle of the tables on Shawn Millers designed track. This drew a good turnout. The winners were the Grand Pooba, his wife and our regional treasurer Priscilla Hooper--- hmmm

Other items included were:

- Preston's report that the jury is still out on Encounter 2013 venue, but close to a decision.
- March meeting theme to be "Funny Hat" Night.
- April meeting theme to be "Ladies Night Dinner"
- Carlisle Import Show 18-20 May-make sure early reservation so will qualify for tent for 2013.

This month's new meeting location was the Lyndon City Line Diner - west side Rte 74 approx. ¼ mile South of Rte 283 on Lancaster, PA. "Funny Hat" night drew 17 members wearing one wild collection of headwear. From a gem Gross displayed before he left early, that looked like one found in the street after the Gay Pride Parade to a neat straw festooned with costume jewelry reminding one of a fashion trend of the not too recent past. When it was time for judging we all stood up for determine 2nd and 3rd since the feathered Gay Pride number took 1st. Joe took 2nd and Rene 3rd. The rest of us each stood there as Bob Sweeney played MC, with Sanders tallying up votes. Bob was having a ball going down the line holding his hand over the one we were voting for. As he was enjoying his role, Sanders was going nuts trying to keep up with vote counting. The whole thing was hilarious!

Other March stuff included the following:

- Preston announces the current top rated Encounter 2013 Venue will be the site of our next meeting April 17th. Details to follow. Don't miss your chance to add your input to this meet.
- Don't forget to register for Carlisle 18-20 May and check out corporate regalia selections.

Looks like it's time to road prep your Healey for the season. It will sneak up on you like April 15th & the tax man, so don't put it off and miss an event. I sure am looking forward to this season, hope you are too.



Winner Charlie Grove

North Jersey

by George Crombie

Oh, gee; where do I start? I guess some time after I wrote my last article would be nice, don't you think? Quite a few members gathered together at The Bamboo Grill at the Basking Ridge Country Club (I think that's in Basking Ridge, folks) on March 6th at 7:00 PM for an Encounter 2012 planning meeting. Attending this meeting were Bob Pense, Mark Goodman, Richard Ippoliti, Steve Jekogian, Larry Gersten, Allen Rosenberg, Andy and Martha Smith, Steve and Ann Feld, Ralph Scarfogliero, and George Crombie. Also joining us for an evening of merriment and confusion were Paul Parfrey and Tony Difransisco, all the way out from the Long Island Region. President Ian Kessen didn't make this meeting; he sent word that he was just a bit under the weather, but we did manage to carry on without him; just barely, although he certainly was missed. A lot of information was passed around, quite freely, actually, which somewhat helped dilute the confusion that generally occurs when this many Alpha Males get together in one place at one time. Mix in a little vino, some suds, and a bunch of burgers, and a quiet little meeting tends to get rather boisterous. The plans are coming together quite nicely, with just a few little details yet to be clarified. After all, all the big stuff (like Where: The Plaza at Somerset; When: August 9-11, 2012; Who: anybody and every body who wants to join us; What: Encounter 2012; and Why: because we all want to have some fun and meet up with you all!) has already been decided. The rest of it will sort of fall into place.

On that topic: I have volunteered to locate the Valve Cover Racetrack and get it to the venue on time. Does anybody have any idea who has it? Please give me a call if you can help me track it down. My cell number is 908-963-7158; home number is 908-243-0693. Or you can e-mail me at george_crombie@yahoo.com. By the time you folks get to read this, we will have had our next planning meeting (which will be held on Monday, April 2nd at 7:00 PM again at The Bamboo Grill in Basking Ridge). My hope is to make a few calls to people I think can steer me in the right direction before then, so that I can assure those that swing the mighty bats that I am on top of "my" thing. If I don't get to talk to you directly (oh, yee who has said track) before you read this, PLEASE give me a shout!!

Even with the weather acting the way it has been for the past several weeks, that is just about all the Regional news I have for you all. Since I don't hibernate Little Red for the winter, I have taken her out several times for short hops to keep the

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Bruce and Inan Phillips

North Jersey Cont...

fluids, well, fluid. Just today, (Wednesday, March 21st) I had the afternoon off and my daughter, Sarah, had the day off, so we decided (I'll be honest: I decided) to attempt to adjust the parking brake. A little knowledge is not always a good thing. I jacked the rear of the car up, removed the two rear wheels, and took a peek. I located what I thought was the adjuster and gave it a shot of WD-40. Then I laid down a sheet of cardboard (all of this in the driveway, mind you), grabbed my tool bag and crawled under. And, yes; I did use jack stands.

As is typical when I start a simple project like this, things quickly took a wrong turn. I found out that I didn't possess the correct wrench. I just could not find a 15mm open end wrench. I found a rabbit, a rat, a hammer (oh, the possibilities with that!), but no 15mm. Sarah and I searched all over; in the house, in the garage, under the cars, in the trunks, every where. And I am quite certain that a 15mm open end wrench would not have been one that I would have sent airborne into the neighbor's yard in the past few years. Nope, I just didn't have one. One of the great things about wrenches: one can never have too many of them, right? They are like screwdrivers, only not quite as dangerous. Since my back had already gone into its spasms a couple of times and I was beginning to get the feelings back in my legs, I figured now would be a good time to head out for a parts run.

Sarah and I headed out to the new NAPA store in town. Not only did we find a 15mm box end/open end wrench, but I also picked up a 12" rear wiper blade for my Highlander. Why make another trip, right? Back home again, I crawled under the car again and promptly got rust in my eye. I tried adjusting the cable at the junction, but it didn't do any good. Well, while I'm under here, I think to myself, why don't I just have a



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North Jersey Cont...

look at the wires and connections to/from the harness to the fuel sending unit and the fuel pump? I think I may have mentioned a time or two that the fuel gauge hasn't worked in this thing since I bought it. I had Sarah turn the key on and watch the fuel gauge while I wiggled the wires a little bit.

Next, I tapped (I swear I didn't hit it hard!!) the bottom of the tank with the plastic handle of a screwdriver. I wiggled the wires again. I smelled gas at the exact moment that Sarah asked me if I smelled gas. "What the...?" was all I got out before a couple of drops of gas dripped into my ear. The next few words weren't quite so pleasant. I saw that the leak was coming from what looked like a cold patch on the bottom of the tank. I grabbed a couple paper towels and stuffed them against the leak. I made sure that Sarah had shut off the ignition, and then I sent her into the garage looking for an aluminum broiler pan. She brought that and a gas can. I tried a couple of wrenches (the 15mm was one of them) before I found that an old 18mm I've had for years was the perfect size for the drain bolt. Will wonders never cease? I placed the gas can under the small hole to catch the drips.

Next, I loosened the drain plug for the fuel tank with the broiler pan under it and the gas began to flow out with gusto. It was then that I noticed that the pan had several small holes in it. The gas was leaking out all over the cardboard, and soaking through and onto the driveway that we had just had resealed last October. Meanwhile, Sarah was back in the house looking for another container. I made like the dude who stuck his finger in the dike to plug the leak, only to find that he didn't have enough fingers to plug them all. After fishing the drain plug out of the pan and quickly threading it back into the bottom of the tank, all the while with gas splashing me in the face and running down my arm to pool under my shoulder, I got Sarah to bring me over another gas can and a funnel.

After mopping up what we could and taking up a couple layers of driveway, I rolled my eyes, took a deep breath and tried it again, this time aiming for the funnel over the gas can. Wouldn't you know it, I dropped the drain plug into the funnel, where it promptly plugged the outflow whereupon the funnel overflowed, and gas came cascading down on me yet again. Damn! I didn't think that tank could hold so much gas! I plugged the drain hole with my finger again while I fished the plug out of the funnel.

Swapping between gas cans and two funnels, we must

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North Jersey Cont...

have drained at least 20 gallons of fuel from that 6 or 7 gallon tank. We transferred almost a full 5 gallons into Sarah's and my daily drivers and we still ended up with almost half of a 2.5 gallon can. Why the heck did this have to happen so soon after I had filled up? Why couldn't it have happened just before I ran out of gas? While I was laying under the car drenched with gas pondering these two questions, the answer came to me (I would say "like a flash", but with all those gas fumes surrounding my head, I'd better not): "Now I've got something to write my article about!" If I had been thinking, I would have had Sarah grab a camera, so I could have included some pictures (hold the flash, please!).

After the tank was mostly drained, Sarah and I disconnected the filler tube and undid the six nuts holding the tank in place. Dropping the tank down a bit, I disconnected the wire from the sending unit. Sarah went into the house and called E&J Radiator in Somerville to see if he could repair the tank where the cold patch had come off. He said to bring it on by and he'd be happy to have a look at it. E&J is the same place that I had taken Red's radiator to a couple of years ago. I'm hoping he doesn't take as long with this gas tank as he did with the radiator, or I'll be without Red for the entire season. I'll let you know. Meanwhile, since Little Red's going to be laid up for a little while, maybe Sarah and I will get a chance to replace the wiring harness. Gee, I wonder what could possibly go wrong when we do that? I shudder to think...

Anyway, next on the schedule for the North Jersey Region is another Encounter planning meeting on MONDAY, APRIL 2nd at THE BAMBOO GRILL in BASKING RIDGE at 7:00 PM. After that, we may try to get in a monthly club meeting later in April. As always, stay tuned to your e-Flashes for the latest on what's happening. Until then, I'll see you out there somewhere.



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Perfection Delivered...

Philadelphia

by John & Jennifer Payne

Fourteen people showed for the monthly muster at Marianos tappy. The big draw was Dear Leader's offer to provide free brew to whoever drove a Healey to the meeting. Walt White and the Paynes showed up with theirs and proceeded to down big quantities of the prize.

El Presidente Ray informed the gathering that the corporate state was in "good shape" He further stated that the website was being upgraded and that financially AHSTC was in better shape than the U.S. government. He further stated that Encounter was coming along nicely and a Wednesday night event was being added to Encounter. Oh yes, the renewals are out so send money early and often. Dear Leader needs another car.

Speaking of Dear Leader, a BN1 is now part of the fleet. It is black with a red interior and is being gone through to get it road worthy. It has been in hiding for 17 years and only has 42,000 miles on the odo. He describes it as a very original condition car. BTW, he found it on Facebook. It was in Ohio as part of a 16 "collection" of restoration projects. Ben Kenyon announced that he has purchased a 1963 Sprite parts car.

Under Preview of Coming Distractions, Carlisle Import Show is May 18 to 20. Register early and the club gets a free tent for the Healey group. Need 20 people to pony up for the cause. The Urbans are planning a Tax Day Run on April 15. This to celebrate the last day you have any money to do this sort of thing. More details on the local internet soon. Jason also announced that the Hershey Hill Climb event is scheduled for June 8 – 10. June the 3rd is the date for the last last picnic ever at the Paynes. As they say, stay tuned for

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Philadelphia Cont...

more on all these wonderful events.

Five of our number are headed to Louisville for Conclave. The Dunkleys are driving their 3000. The Tri-carbs (better known as the Wogloms), El Presidente Ray and Dear Leader (John Heffron) are also planning to attend.

Oh yes. The valve cover race ramp is among the missing. Rumor has it that it is being held for ransom in its founder's basement. Since hills in New Jersey tend to be railroad crossings (AMTRAK trains tend to spoil the events) the regulation ramp is needed. Hopefully, a suitable agreement can be made to retrieve it by Encounter.

Oh yes, on the home front, the reverse arabesque has been performed and the Datsun is now in the expert hands of the welder and the BJ8 is moved to its summer lodging and running. Datsun was purchased with a huge amount of faith that it would fit in our trailer. It did – just! It is about the same length as the BJ8 which just fits. Rather be lucky that good!

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Brandywine

by Ernie Leser

The annual “Pizza at Pete’s” was held on Saturday, March 10th. As usual, this is one of the year’s highlight events and was well attended. Master chef Dee Caffrey provided a steady supply of a variety of yummy pizzas while Pete Roberts had stocked the cooler with a good assortment of brew. Salads and sweets (including an “Austin Healey Car Club” cake) completed the feast. A tour of Pete’s beautifully restored Healeys added to the enjoyment of the afternoon. Also attending were Jim Bewley, Dick Doherty, Jim Martin, Tom and Diane Zalewski; Brian Ehret and his friend Heather; Katie and Tom Coletti; Chuck, Sue, Gina, and Randy Ott; Dave, Ann, and Danielle Ehret; Andrew, Lydia, Joan and Ernie Leser. Many thanks to Dee and Pete for a super event!



Dee Caffrey, Katie Coletti, and Ann Ehret enjoying “Pizza at Pete’s”.

President Chuck Ott held a brief business meeting in which he related happenings at the recent corporate meeting. Brandywine Region has 35 members at present with a small but adequate treasury. Encounter 2012 is coming along well. The special guest will once again be Gerry Coker, designer of the AH 100. Quite appropriate since it’s the 60th anniversary of its introduction in 1952. Should be another excellent Encounter. Registration forms are in the Flash.

Our April event will be a tech session at Chuck Ott’s “Taj Garage”. Minor repair items will be tackled, while advice will be handed out for more major undertakings. The date is Saturday, April 21st at 1 pm. Chuck’s house is at 109 Airmont Dr., Middletown, DE. For questions as to the suitability of your repair project, give Chuck a call ahead of time (302-378-7287).

In anticipation of good weather, our May events include two car shows and the annual Brandywine social.

Sat. May 5th. Lewes British Car Show in Lewes, Delaware. Contact is Mike Tyler (302-645-7572).

Sat. May 12th, 12 noon. Brandywine Social. The Whip Tavern, 1383 North Chatham Road, West Marlborough, PA. RSVP to Kris Garrett (610-558-1334) by May 5th.

Sat. May 19th. Carlisle Import Show. Remember to register with AHSTC if you plan to attend.

Brandywine Cont...

BRANDYWINE 2012 EVENTS

April, Sat. 21st, 1pm. "Taj Garage" tech session. The Ott's house, 109 Airmont Dr., Middletown, DE. For info call Chuck (302-378-7287).

May, Sat. 5th. Lewes British Car Show. Contact is Mike Tyler (302-645-7572).

May, Sat. 12th, 12 noon. Brandywine Social. The Whip Tavern, 1383 North Chatham road, West Marlborough, PA. RSVP to Kris (610-558-1334) by May 5th.

May, Sat. 19th. Carlisle Import Show. Remember to register with AHSTC if you plan to attend.

June, Sat. 2nd. "Cars of England" show. Westtown, PA.

June, Sat. 9th. Fun Rally. British Motor Car clubs of Delaware.

June, 15-17th. Conclave in Kentucky. Contact Kris Garrett if interested in attending.

July, Sat. 14th. Rally to brewery or winery. Details TBD.

August 9-11. Encounter 2012.

September, Sat. 8th. Crab Crawl and Feast. The Philip's place, St. Michaels, MD.

September, Sat. 15th. British Car Club of Delaware. Marshalton Steam Museum, Yorklyn, DE.

September, Sun. 16th. Hagley Car Show, Wilmington, DE.

September, Sat. 29th. Classic and Exotic Car Show, Greenville, DE.

October, Sunday 7th, 1 pm. Brandywine Region Picnic. The Leser residence, Elkton, MD. RSVP to Joan by the 4th (410-398-7308).

November, Thurs. 15th, 7 pm. Elections. Stoney's British Pub, Concord Pike, Wilmington, DE. RSVP to Kris by the 8th (610-558-1334).

December, Sat. 15th, 6 pm. Christmas Party and Ugly Gift Exchange. The Zalewski residence, North East, MD. RSVP to Diane by the 8th (410-287-5885).

January 2013, Thurs. 17th, 7 pm. Events Planning. Matilda's, Newark, DE.

Encounter 2012...the 35th

By Allen Rosenberg and Steve Jekogian



This year's Encounter weekend is the 35th such AHSTC Healey event, and the 60th ...that's amazing! New Jersey is the responsible group this year with the assistance of Long Island, so we are here to grovel and so passionate is our plea, that we anticipate you all sending in your registration forms by the time you read this. You know you are going...you always do, so why wait.

The location for ENCOUNTER 35, is the magnificent The Plaza at Somerset nestled in the scenic hills of Bridgewater, New Jersey. It is situated in close proximity to some beautiful areas and roads. The Crown Plaza is conveniently located off route I-287 and about 15 minutes south of I-78.

Check out the hotel below and then remember the room rate is \$92.00 per night.

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www.crowneplaza.com/somersetnj

Please visit the link to view our virtual tour <http://www.vfmii.com/exc/aspquery?command=invoke&ipid=1074492&ids=95443>

To help us celebrate the 35th anniversary of this great "family reunion", we are planning a Three day event starting Thursday, August 9th with a departure date of Sunday, August 12th and feature an array of the usual events, plus some surprises. Whether you enjoy rallying, autocrossing, racing your valve cover, showing your car, or just plain socializing, this is the event for you. We will also have the traditional events such as a funkhana, kiddiekhana, arts, crafts and photo competition, assorted tech sessions, Chinese auction/tricky tray, regalia sales, flea market and probably the finest thing we do annually, our charity auction.

If you need to contact me you can always e-mail me at bigalnj@aol.com, or call me at my office at 908-754-7511. You can also contact my illustrious co-chair Steve Jekogian, at his office at 201-213-8217 steve.jekogian@merck.com. Hope to see all of your registrations very soon. BE THERE OR BE SQUARE!!!!!!

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British Motor Club Association



Austin-Healey Sports & Touring Club

ENCOUNTER 2012

August 9, 10 and 11, 2012 - Somerset, NJ

(<http://austin-healey-stc.org>)

Last Name _____ First Name _____ Spouse/Guest _____
 Street _____ Apt.# _____
 City _____ State _____ Zip _____
 Phone – Home(____)(____) Work(____)(____) Is this your 1st Encounter? (Y/N) _____
 Attending Children's Names & Ages _____
 Region/Club Affiliation _____ E-Mail Address _____

Car(s) You Are Bringing to the Event:

1. Model _____ Year _____ 2. Model _____ Year _____ 3. Model _____ Year _____

Registration Instructions

- Complete registration form
- Make check payable to:
"AHSTC Encounter"
- Enclose both in an envelope and mail to:
Encounter Registration
C/O Andy Smith
1 Cherry Tree Lane
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(908) 879-1740
E-mail: encounter07@earthlink.net

Registration Fee Includes:

- One show car, 2 adults, and children (under 21)
(Additional cars/adults on a single registration are extra)
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- Free flea market space
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Hotel Registration

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Call the hotel at (732) 560-0500, ask for "in-house reservations", then mention "Austin-Healey" to receive our special rate of \$92 per room per night.
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For information, please contact George Marinos
201-445-3124 or gmari2@verizon.net

Arrival Date: 8/9 8/10 8/11

Will you need flea market space? Yes / No

Will you need regalia space? Yes / No

Registration Fees

AHSTC Members

\$55.00 if postmarked by June 1, 2012 _____

\$75.00 postmarked after June 1, 2012 _____

Join AHSTC for 1 year @ \$30.00 _____

Non-Members

\$70.00 if postmarked by June 1, 2012 _____

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Extra car(s) @ \$10.00 ea. _____

Extra adults (over 21) @ \$15.00 ea. _____

Friday Barbecue @ \$25.00 ea. _____

Saturday Banquet - adults @ \$30.00 ea. _____

Choose entrée(s):

Sliced beef sirloin _____

Grilled filet of sole _____

Stuffed portobello mushroom _____

Saturday Pizza Party

Children 12 & under @ \$10.00 _____

"Chinese Auction" Tickets – 7 for \$5.00 _____

Concour Judging/Awards fee @ \$70.00 _____

Event T-shirts

___ S ___ M ___ L ___ XL @ 13.00 ea. _____

Total Remittance (US)

The Hunt for Healey History

The mystery surrounding the red 1964 Sebring Sprite Prototype

by Baird Foster, Contributing Editor

In the 1960s, The Donald Healey Motor Company (DHMC) designed, built, and developed a limited number of Sprite models aimed at competition in three major racing venues: Le Mans, the Targa Florio, and Sebring, Florida. These highly developed Works Sprite Prototypes looked very little like the standard production Sprites; however, some of them were envisioned as possible production cars. One such car is the subject of my story—a red 1964 Sebring Sprite Prototype coupe that has rarely been seen since it was shipped to the USA in June 1964.

In the early 1990s, while on a tour of a Delaware Valley historic site with a group from the Antique Automobile Club of America, a member mentioned to me that nearby was a Donald Healey Motor Company Works Sebring Sprite. He noted that this Sprite was seldom seen but was, in his words, “as it left the Warwick Works in 1964.”

The car appears

Fast forward to the Austin-Healey Sports & Touring Club’s annual event, Encounter, in August 2010, at Normandy Farm in Whitpain Township, Pennsylvania. During the Popular Car Show, AHSTC member Ben Kenion came up to me and excitedly said, “Come and see the Sebring Sprite that just rolled in!” I’d examined and written about a 1966 Works Sprite several years previously, so I was very interested to see this important piece of Healey racing history.

Ben introduced me to Kurt Ritthaler and his red coupe Sebring Sprite that he’d brought to Encounter at the invitation of AHSTC member and motorsports enthusiast Jason Urban. Kurt showed me his scrupulously maintained records of the car, which he said had competed in the 12-Hour Race at Sebring in late March, 1964. After taking some photos, I got permission to follow up with a story about this car, which turned out to be the very car about which I’d heard more than fifteen years previously.

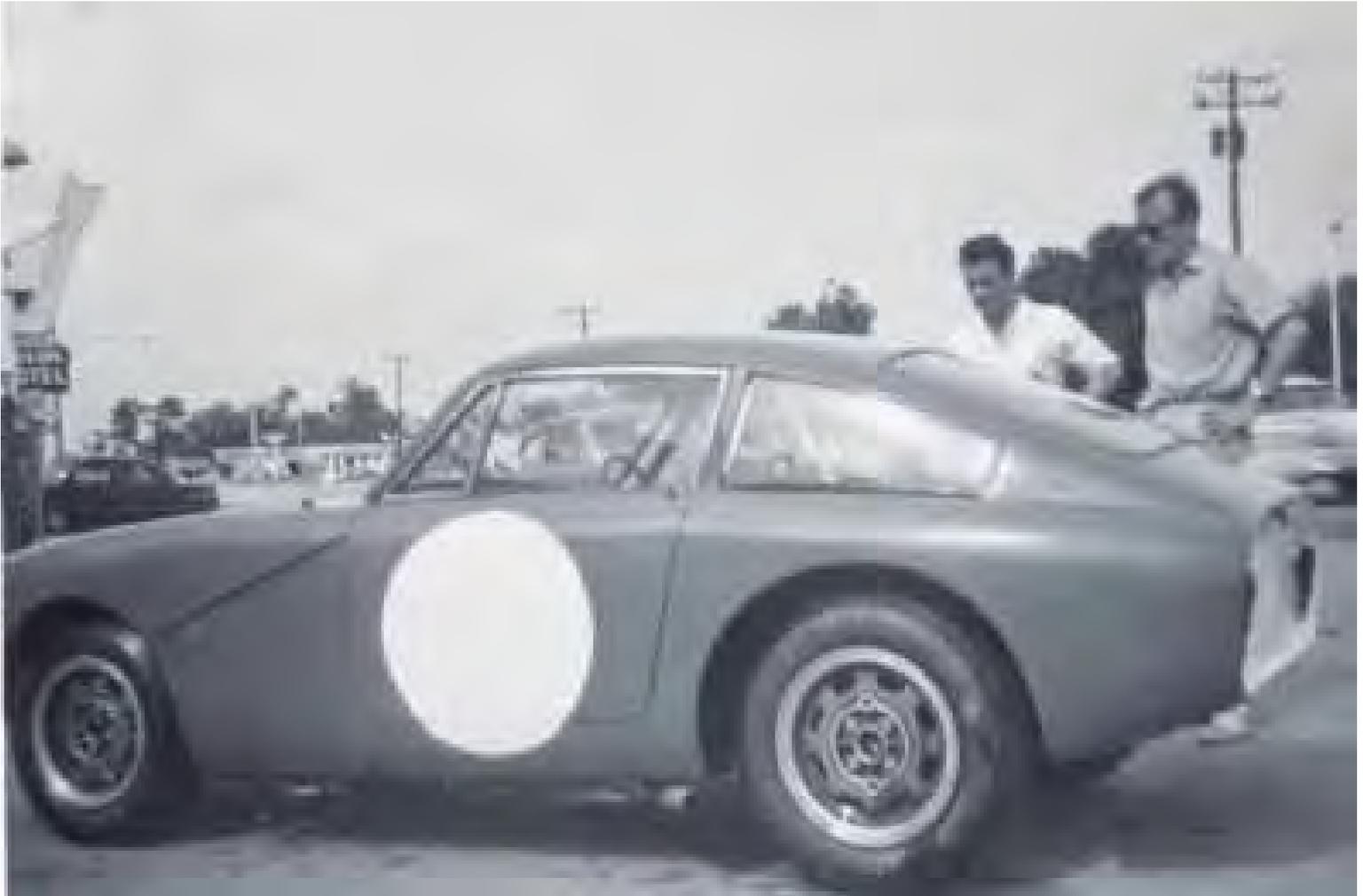
The Search for Healey History begins

Time passed until the spring of 2011, when I called Kurt to arrange a visit. He responded, “I’ve been waiting for your call.” Ben and I drove out to Kurt’s home in Huntingdon Valley, Pennsylvania, where we reviewed all his records of the car he’d purchased from Mr. Stephen Pitcairn in July, 1985. It appeared that this car indeed competed in the 12-Hour Race in Sebring in 1964. Apparently, the red coupe lasted nine laps, only to retire with rear axle problems.

As I saw the written records and the car, I thought that this story would be rather straightforward—the records spoke for themselves. The DHMC bill of sale noted engine number XSP 2173-2 and chassis



Hunt for Healey History Cont...



Driver Al Pease at right before Sebring race, 1964. (Al Pease)

number HAN8-64-R-2. A simple tale could be written about a Works Austin-Healey that raced at Sebring. Or did it? Despite the DHMC documentation that read “built for Sebring 1964,” there was no physical proof that this red Sprite raced at the Sebring 12 Hour Race in 1964. My hunt for Healey history began.

Blue vs. Red

Kurt, an avid motorsports and sports car enthusiast, has attended many racing events, including the 1964 Sebring race. He now asked the big question: “How could this red car have raced there when all the other Sebring Healey Works cars were blue?” The purportedly easy story suddenly posed a new challenge.

I began the hunt for more information on this red coupe. I contacted knowledgeable Healey enthusiast/owner/racer Charles Matthews in England, who steered me to other Sprite enthusiasts in Europe.

Correspondence in 1964

In the meantime, Kurt’s documentation and correspondence provided this rough timeline for his Sprite:

Hunt for Healey History Cont...

21 March 1964 – 12 Hour Race held at Sebring, Florida

24 March 1964 – Stephen Pitcairn, a Delaware Valley resident, BMC dealer, and sports car aficionado, wrote to the Donald Healey Motor Company (DHMC) asking if any of the “Sprite Coupes” he had seen compete at Sebring a few days earlier were for sale.

2 April 1964 – A letter from DHMC, signed by Bic Healey for his father, Donald M. Healey, to Pitcairn states that “...normally we do not sell any of these prototypes. But in your case I think we may be able to make an exception...” A full description and “idea of the price” were to follow.

22 April 1964 – DHMC (Bic Healey) writes to Pitcairn and includes the specification sheet “for the Sebring Coupe Sprite.” This letter states that it is difficult to arrive at a price for such a special car (only two having been made), but suggests a price which will “include a complete overhaul when the car arrives back here from Sebring...”

27 April 1964 – Pitcairn writes to the DHMC and forwards a deposit check.

30 April 1964 – Bic Healey writes to Pitcairn acknowledging the “...cheque by way of a deposit on the 1100 cc. Sebring Sprite.” This letter also notes that the “Sebring cars have as yet not returned from the States.” According to Bic, the cars were due on the 6th of May, and he notes that “We shall require...in the region of two to three weeks to go through the car and put it into first class order...”

11 June 1964 – DHMC tells Pitcairn that the Sprite “will be sent freight forward” to Philadelphia and asks for payment of the balance due. Bic Healey adds, “The car, incidentally, looks most attractive after the attention given to it...”

16 June 1964 – Pitcairn remits balance to DHMC and requests the name of the vessel in which the Sprite will be shipped and the date of sailing.

19 June 1964 – Mr. J. Cooper, a Director of the DHMC, writes Pitcairn and tells him “...The Sprite is being shipped on the S.S. Wolverine State from Southampton on the 24th instant [June], which is scheduled to arrive in Philadelphia on the 11th of July.” Pitcairn is advised that he should contact Royston Distributors, Philadelphia, which is the agent.

6 July 1964 – DHMC confirms the shipping date of 24 June regarding the S.S. Wolverine State.



Sebring, 1964. Note the shape of the bonnet's rear cutline around the wiper posts. (AlPease)

Hunt for Healey History Cont...

13 July 1964 – Pitcairn writes to the DHMC to confirm receipt of the Sprite on 10 July and notes “...as can be expected, there was the usual minor damage caused by the shipper but this is covered by insurance.” Pitcairn goes on to say, “Your treatment of the interior is excellent. In fact, between competition events the car could be used as a show piece.”

The Timing Puzzle

Based on the information above, I noted that in none of the correspondence was the color of the Sprite ever mentioned; the factory specification for the “Prototype Sprite” clearly stated that this car was “Built in 1964 specially for Sebring”; and “This car did little of the race before being damaged (Bent rear axle). This will all be replaced and the car will be as new.” (22 April 1964)

The Bill of Sale specified this Sprite’s chassis number as HAN8-64-R-2, the engine number as XSP.2173-2. With this info in hand, I provided my photos of the car along with the chassis and engine number to my Sprite resources in Europe.



Sebring, 1964. Note Austin-Healey 3000 ahead of race car. (Al Pease)

Hunt for Healey History Cont...

My questions about this Sprite were about its participation in the 1964 Sebring race (those who attended did not recall a red car) and its possible running at Le Mans on June 20-21, as most Works Healeys at Le Mans were thought to be red.

The records for the 1964 12 Hour Race results at Sebring show the Austin-Healey entrants by the DHMC included the following:

Car #61, Austin-Healey Sprite driven by Clive Baker and John Colgate. This car had a British registration number of 770 KNX and raced in Class P.3.0 (Prototype, under three liters). It finished 24th overall, one of the last cars classified. This car was silver blue.

Car #33, Austin-Healey 3000 driven by Paddy Hopkirk and Grant Clark. The registration number was 56 FAC and was a DNF (did not finish). The color was silver blue.

Car #67, Austin-Healey Sprite driven by Al Pease (Canada) and Donna Mae Mims (USA). It was entered in Class GT 1.3 (Grand Touring up to 1.3 liters). Records say that this car was a DNF after 9 laps because of rear axle failure. Neither registration number nor color was included in the records.

I noted that the cars with race numbers 61 and 67 were both Sprites but were entered in different classes: P (Prototype) and GT (Grand Touring). As far as is known, both engine displacements were the same, at 1100 cc (1.1 liters). Photos of car #61 at Sebring indicate that this coupe in 1964 looked nearly identical to Kurt's red coupe in question. The differences were subtle: the bonnet configuration and the duct for the oil cooler under the grill. Of course, car #61 was silver blue; the Sprite in question, definitely red! Neither color nor registration number was noted for car #67. I wondered, Could #67 be Kurt's car?

I sent the info to my contacts in Europe, hoping to receive some clues to help construct the pieces of this red car puzzle. Their responses proved interesting, especially as some included memories nearly 50 years old.

With only the engine and chassis numbers of the red Sprite to refer to, Derek Tew, of the British Motor Industry Heritage Trust, e-mailed to say, "I have had a look through the build ledger, but there is no obvious candidate as to the identity of this car." (The BMIHT provides information for production vehicles only; no specials or Works cars are included in their build records.) He suggested finding any body numbers; if found, these might enable a search for the stock Sprite body which was used as a basis for this specially built Works Sprite. No body numbers were evident on Kurt's red car.

Clive Baker, a talented BMC driver and the co-driver of the other silver blue Sprite Prototype at Sebring, 1964, recalls: "All Sebring Sprites in 1964 were silver blue in

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Hunt for Healey History Cont...

color. The car John Colgate and I drove did not have a bent axle. The 1964 Le Mans car [770 KNX, driven by Baker and Bill Bradley to 24th place overall] looks like the red one in your picture—but had an external cooler box fitted under the front. This car was also silver blue and had no interior panels, etc. fitted. But I recall Geoff Healey using one of the cars to drive from Cornwall to the Cape [Warwick] in road trim, at about the same time.”

At this point in the search, it seemed no one who attended or drove at Sebring 1964 could recollect a red Sprite Prototype. I puzzled over the fact that the 1964 Le Mans race was run on 20-21 June, and this red car shipped out of Southampton on 24 June. Therefore, how could this blue car, 770 KNX, change colors, be fitted with an interior, and ship to America in a span of just three days? Not likely.

Clive added that “we never raced any red Prototypes except the Day-Glo orange one at Sebring...I can only think that Geoff may have used it at some time; he used to change chassis no. and engine plates between the Works cars quite often.”

Perhaps Clive meant that he, himself and his co-drivers never raced any red Prototypes. I thought that his mention of the changed chassis and engine number plates was interesting and might end up applying to Kurt’s red Sprite Prototype.

Could it possibly be 770 KNX?

Meanwhile, I sent photos of the red Sprite and information about the car to Ian Grainger in England. Ian, a Sprite enthusiast, races Healeys in the UK. He responded that “the car you quote with that engine number and chassis number is indeed the very car pictured in Chevalier’s book [Les Healey au Mans 1949-1970] and had registration number 770 KNX...This car was the last ¼ elliptic springs competition car and was registered to the Donald Healey Motor Company on 11th March 1964 and was specifically constructed for the 1964 Le Mans 24 Hour Race. The car was blue in the race and had a 1098 cc engine.” Grainger continues, “Its license expired on 30th September, 1964 after which it was restored by the Healeys and sold to the United States.”

To be Continued in the May issue of The Flash...



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Events Calendar

APRIL

- April 14 - Central PA Triumph, Stampler Tech Session, 45 High St., Stewartstown PA (map). Tech session focuses on the key steps of doing an auto restoration.
- April 15 – Lanco MG Club Drive & Meeting, ending at 3 PM at the Cross Keys Diner, New Oxford (map)
- April 15 - The Williamsburg British Car Club presents the 13th Annual British and European Car Show, 9AM at Chickahominy Riverfront Park, 1350 John Tyler Highway(Rt5), Williamsburg, VA 23185. web site - <http://www.wmbgbrit.com/>, contact – Roy Gavilan at rgavilan@verizon.net or call 757-220-4774.
- April 17 – AHSTC Harrisburg Region monthly meeting, 6:30 PM - Ladies night – men buy their lady's dinner, \$5.00 worth of 50/50 tickets
- April 21 – British Invasion at Elk Landing, MD, British Car Club of Delaware
- <http://bccdelaware.com/events.htm>
- April 22 – SVVSCC Roadside America Run , a drive to this famous model railroad treat plus the promises of some good eating after the run, Contact: Charlie Demmy
- April 28 – Auburn, Cord, Duesenburg Demo Day at the Simeone Museum– 1921 Duesenberg GP (display only), 1933 Auburn 12-165, 1935 Auburn 851, 1937 Supercharged Cord
- April 25-29 – Spring Carlisle, Carlisle, PA. For more information and directions Click here
- April 29 – 14th annual Britain On The Green, 8301 East Boulevard Drive, Alexandria, VA, The grounds and gardens of Collingwood provide a fitting background. http://www.capitaltriumphregister.com/BOG_2012/BOG_2012.htm

MAY

- May 5- “Britfest 2012” Horseshoe Lake Park, Succasunna, NJ. For more information and registration, <http://www.mgccnj.org/flyers/Britfest%202012%20Registration.pdf>
- May 5 - Lewes British Motorcar Show. Lewes, DE. At Lewes Historical Complex. 11 AM to 3 PM. For more info call the Lewes Chamber of Commerce @ 302.645.8073
- May 6 – MGs of Baltimore “Get the Dust Off” Rallye. Info & form
- May 15 – AHSTC Harrisburg Region Monthly Meeting, 6:30 PM, Joke night – must tell a joke or get fined \$1.00. Best joke as determined by audience applause get a prize. Jokes have to be suitable for grandmother, mothers and children of all ages.

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OCT08

Events Calendar Cont...

MAY CONT...

- May 17-20 - Jefferson 500 Vintage Races - Summit Point, WV, http://www.vrgonline.org/events/jefferson/2012/jeff500_2012_flier.jpg
- May 18-20 - Carlisle Import & Kit Nationals, Carlisle, PA.
- May 20 - Lanco Club Meeting, 3:00 PM, Mc Cleary's Irish Pub, 130 West Front St, Marietta, PA 17547. Tech session at 1 PM. For directions [Click here](#)
- May 26 – England vs. Italy in the battle for LeMans Demo Day at the Simeone Museum, 1927 Bentley Speed Model, 1930 Bentley 4.5 L Supercharged, 1933 Alfa Romeo 8C 2300 Le Mans
- May 26 - June 3 - British Car Week. Drive your car everywhere!!! For more information [Click here](#) to go to the British Car Week site and check on the events around the country.
- May 28 - America in International Racing Before the War Demo Day at Simeone. 1921 Duesenburg, 1930 duPont Le Mans, 1929 Stutz Supercharged Le Mans

JUNE

- June 1 - Cruise In at the AACA Museum, Join the Antique Automobile Club of America Hershey Region and the AACA Museum for a fun evening of cars as we host a "Cruise IN" All vehicles of any year are welcome to be on display - no registration fee will be charged. Food vendors will be on hand with lots of tailgating options and the Museum will be open from 5:00 – 9:00 PM with a special admission price of just \$5 per person from 5-9 PM
- June 2 – "Cars and Motorcycles of England", Oakbourne Mansion, Westtown, PA. Sponsored by Delaware Valley Triumphs, Ltd and Delaware Valley Jaguar Club. <http://www.bccnepa.com/britcarcalendar.html#/?i=1>
- June 3 - The Original British Car Day, Lilypons Water Garden, Adamstown, MD. 35th Anniversary Meet sponsored by the Chesapeake Chapter of the New England MG T Register. For more information and registration http://www.chesapeakechaptermgtclub.com/OBCD_main.htm
- June 3 - "Seventeenth Red Mill British Car Day" Sponsored by the M.G. Drivers Club of North America to benefit the Red Mill Museum Village 56 Main Street Clinton, NJ. Limited to 100 pre-registered British vehicles due to the size of the show grounds. For more information and registration <http://www.mgdriversclub.com/upcoming/redmill12.html>
- June 6-10 – North American MGB Register National Meet, 50th anniversary of the MGB, Dillard, Georgia ([click here](#))
- June 8-10 - The Elegance and Grand Ascent At Hershey, The Elegance At Hershey will bring the finest of race cars and show quality collector cars together for a weekend celebrating the automobile.
- June 9 – AHSTC Harrisburg Region Spring Tour – Miller's Auto Storage
- June 9 – "A Touch of England" British Motorcar & Motorcycle Gathering and show will be held on the

News & Classifieds

Of Interest/For Sale

SPARCO RACING SEATS FOR SALE. Two new red Sparco #00945RS racing seats with adjustable lumbar pads, adjustable mounting tracks and mounting hardware kits. Never used - still in plastic shipping wrapper. Cost over \$1400.00. Will sell for reasonable offer. Del Border, Glen Rock, PA, (717) 235-1086 or delborder@comcast.net.”



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